

Three Things

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Summary: Eames notices everything, thank goodness.

Three Things

When Eames entered the kitchen, he saw Arthur bracing his arms against the counter, his dark head hanging and his eyes closed. He was just standing there, perfectly still. He was impeccably dressed, as always, his oxford tucked neatly into the waistband of his trousers, all clean lines and perfect tailoring. But Eames knew that posture. It meant that the usually composed and competent point man was slipping. He'd been wondering; Arthur had seemed a little quieter lately, a little snippier, a little less stringent. He'd been going to bed earlier at night, fast asleep when Eames climbed in next to him but when Eames woke in the morning, he'd be passed out on the couch, or in the recliner, or occasionally still awake reading a book.

"I'm fine," he'd say when asked. Or, on a particularly bad day, "I'm not sure what's wrong."

Eames had been wondering, but he hadn't been worrying. Until now.

"Darling?" he asked casually, setting the bag of groceries on the counter. "Hungry?"

At the sound of Eames's voice, Arthur straightened as if he'd never been doing anything other than filling a glass of water and flashed him a flat smile. "Sure. Want me to make something?"

Arthur was absolutely not hungry. And he also didn't want to make something. Eames could see it in the slope of his shoulders, the crease between his eyes, and the way he had thrown his suit coat over a chair instead of hanging it.

"That's alright, I got ingredients for something special. You look done in, why don't you have a kip til it's ready."

"I'm fine," he said.

When Eames had everything prepared except for the final simmer, he peeked his head into the living room. Arthur had his laptop in front of him, but he was just staring at it, eyes unfocused.

Eames sat down next to Arthur, quiet and calm, easing as close to Arthur's body as he could. As he sank back into the cushions, Arthur used the momentum to slip a little closer and rest his head on Eames's shoulder. They sat like that for a moment, not moving or speaking, the light fading in the room. Eames tipped his head and rested it on Arthur's and Arthur sighed, a deep, broken sound.

"Anything I can do?" Eames questioned softly.

"I don't know," Arthur said hollowly.

Eames turned and pressed a kiss to Arthur's hair, then stayed there, breathing in the scent of his shampoo and hair gel and exhaling warm breaths across Arthur's scalp. Eventually Arthur raised his head a bit to look Eames in the eyes and give him a sad smile.

Eames tipped their foreheads together. "Three things," he said, tucking a strand of hair behind Arthur's ear. "First, we're going to eat a little bit, because it's going to be delicious. Second, I'm calling Dr. West tomorrow and setting up an appointment for you so he can ask you all the annoying questions that you hate so much."

Arthur huffed out what, on a different day, might have been a laugh.
"And third?"

"Third," Eames said, pulling back and cupping Arthur's face, "I'm going to love you a little bit more, until you feel better." He kissed the tip of Arthur's nose. "Deal?"

Arthur's face crumbled, but he swallowed hard and nodded.
"Deal."

"Good." Eames rose and pulled Arthur up with him. "The food should be ready. Let's eat."

End
file.